

**AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the sentence on pg. 13, beginning on line 5 through line 10 as follows:

The AlN passivation layer 60 (Figure 9) could be deposited, for example, by using plasma, reactive sputtering, or a conventional chemical vapor deposition, to form a ~~continuous~~ continuous and smooth AlN layer across the substrate 12, including the copper plug 56 and the upper surface of the second insulating layer 25.